

### **REMARKS**

The Office Action mailed August 1, 2006 has been carefully reviewed along with the references cited therein. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-37 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements. Claims 1-5, 9-10, 13-19 and 25-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallach et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,929,679) in view of Kilstrom et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,781,960). Claims 6-8 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallach et al. in view of Clark et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,605,156). Claim 11 was rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallach et al. and Kilstrom et al. as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Fukuda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,953,252). Claims 21-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallach et al. and Kilstrom as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Jones et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0187249). Claims 29-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallach et al. in view of Jones et al. Claims 20, 36 and 37 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter.

In this Office Action, claims 1, 13, 17, 29 and 37 have been amended. Claim 36 has been canceled without prejudice. Claim 38 has been added to the application.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112***

Claim 6 has been rejected because the Examiner has found that it is indefinite as to what structure is defined by "omni wheel." An omni wheel is described in paragraph [0040] of Applicants' disclosure as comprising "a wheel that can turn around two perpendicular axes simultaneously." Applicants respectfully assert that the structure "omni wheel" when read in light of Applicants' disclosure is not indefinite.

Independent claims 1 and 29 have been amended to remove "autonomous" from the claim. Accordingly, claim rejections of claims 1-37 under § 112, second paragraph have been remedied.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103***

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite "a nozzle section pivotally mounted to said drive housing, said nozzle section including a suction conduit mechanically connected to and in fluid communication with said hose." Support for this limitation is at least found in Figure 3 of Applicants' disclosure. Wallach et al. discloses attaching hose assembly 130 to a cleaning head module 120, but they do not disclose a nozzle section of the cleaning head module that is pivotally mounted to a drive housing of the cleaning head module. Kilstrom et al. discloses a nozzle part 47 connected to a chassis, but fails to disclose the nozzle part being connected to a hose. Instead, Kilstrom et al. discloses that the nozzle part 47 is in communication with a dust container 17 via what appears to be a rigid inlet channel.

One of ordinary skill in the art would not modify the cleaning head module of Wallach et al. to include a nozzle section pivotally mounted to said drive housing and including a suction conduit mechanically connected to and in fluid communication with the hose. The device in Kilstrom et al. provides no motivation for such a modification since the device in Kilstrom et al. is a self-guiding vacuum cleaner that includes the nozzle section and the dust container in one integral housing. Modifying the cleaning head module disclosed in Wallach et al. to include a nozzle section pivotally mounted to a drive housing where the nozzle section includes a suction conduit mechanically connected to and in full communication with the hose would require a substantial rearrangement of the parts in the device of Wallach et al. that is neither taught nor suggested in Kilstrom et al. In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and those claims that depend from claim 1 patentably define over the cited references.

Claim 29 has been amended to include a limitation similar to original claim 36, which the Examiner found to include allowable subject matter. Even though Applicants have not amended claim 29 to include every limitation that was found in original claim 36, Applicants still maintain that claim 29 is patentable over the references that were cited with regard to claim 29. Accordingly, claim 29 and those claims that depend from claim 29 define over the cited references.

Claim 38 has been added to the application. Claim 38 recites, among other things, "a hose connected at a first end to said first module and at a second end to said nozzle

section of said second module so that said suction opening of said nozzle suction is in communication with said suction source in said first module when said nozzle section is not connected to said drive housing." Support for this limitation is found in paragraph [0058] of Applicants' disclosure. Any proper combination of Wallach et al. in view of Kilstrom et al. fails to teach or disclose the limitations presented in new claim 38. More specifically, Kilstrom et al. fails to disclose a hose connected at a second end to said nozzle section of said second module where the nozzle section is releasably connected to said drive housing. Accordingly, claim 38, and those claims that depend from claim 38, patentably define over the cited references.

### CONCLUSION


For the reasons detailed above, it is respectfully submitted all claims remaining in the application are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early indication of the same is earnestly solicited. In any event, should the Examiner consider personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at the number listed below.

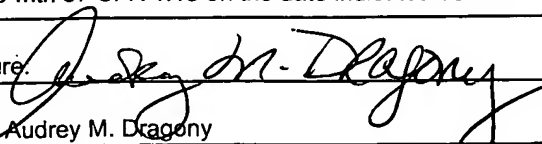
Respectfully submitted,

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November 8, 2006

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